



CONNECTICUT

JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

March 14, 2022

Amy Dowell,

State Director, Education Reform Now CT

RE: SB 387 - An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Council

Co-Chairs Stafstrom and Winfield, Vice Chairs Blumenthal and Flexer, Ranking Members Fishbein and Kissel and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary—my name is Amy Dowell, and I am the State Director of Education Reform Now CT (ERN CT). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **on SB 387 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee**

This bill seeks to enact the recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee. We urge you to pursue this legislative effort, and to enhance this provision with added language raising the minimum age for justice involvement to 12.

Research shows that involvement with the courts at a young age can make children more likely to be court-involved when they are older. Moreover, harsh legal consequences for minors have a discriminatory impact on historically underserved students. We should be investing up front in student success, rather than acting punitively. Every child is deserving of a path towards a future with meaning and the benefits of support and care.

Two years of pandemic-living have resulted in unimaginable stress, public health disparities, isolation, and economic uncertainty, disproportionately impacting the state's highest-need students. Now is the time to offer them additional respite and care.

Thank you for your work to protect the potential of Connecticut's students.



About Education Reform Now CT

The state chapter of a national organization and affiliate of DFER CT, Education Reform Now CT is a 501(c)(3) that operates as a think tank and policy advocate, promoting great educational opportunities and achievement for all by increasing equity, protecting civil rights, and strengthening the social safety net.